



Urban Harvest

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Your support of Urban Harvest reminds me that even in the era of social distancing, we are still in this together. Please consider renewing your donation at this time so we can continue to “Grow Resilience” into 2021 and beyond.

Dear Friends of Urban Harvest,

This past year, we recognized the need to lift up one another and build resilient communities across Houston, coming together to face the health and economic uncertainty wrought by the pandemic. During this difficult time, I have been impressed by Urban Harvest’s innovative and timely response to meet these crises head on.

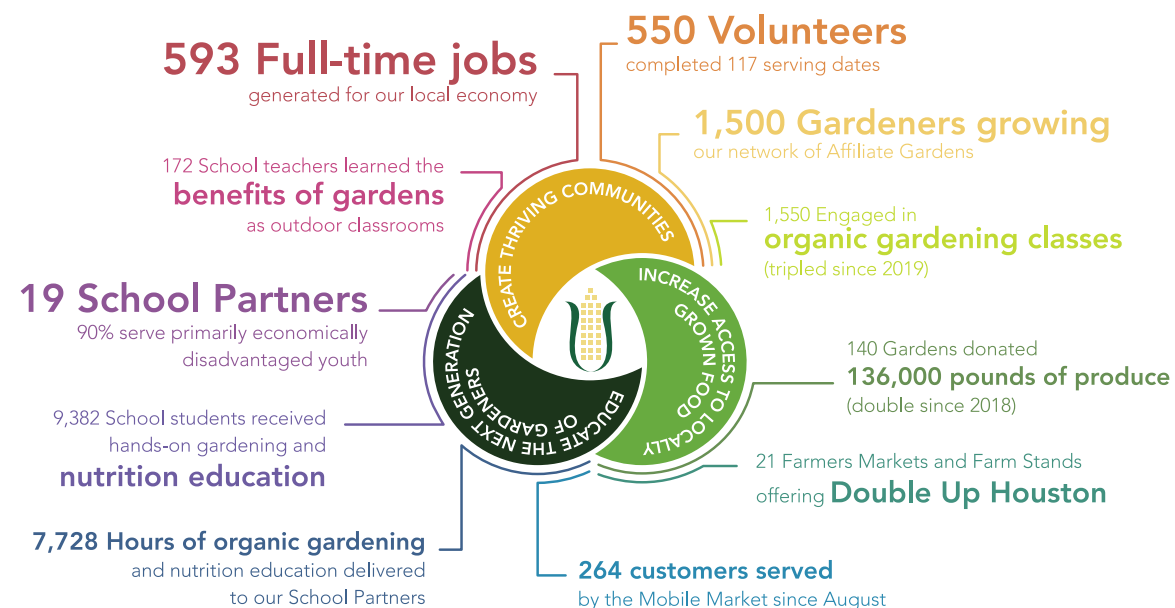
As you will read in the pages that follow, Urban Harvest’s COVID-response coalesced into **Grow Resilience; a coordinated strategy to meet the unprecedented food insecurity crisis facing our city.** Grow Resilience became our vehicle to provide fresh, healthy foods to those with limited access along with countless complementary resources on nutrition and gardening. Our Farmers Market remained open, adding sanitizing stations and even a drive thru to ensure customer safety and providing farmers a steady income throughout the pandemic. Our Classes moved online, reaching three times the number of people than in years past and our budding Food Access Program expanded to offer Double Up Houston, our SNAP incentive program, at 21 markets and farms stands. To cap it all off, we launched a Mobile Market to bring fresh, local food to hard-to-reach communities across Houston.

In what has been an uncertain time for all of us, I am extremely proud of what we have accomplished together and am honored to serve as President of the Board of Directors.

With Gratitude,

Marguerite Johnson
President of the Board of Directors

TOGETHER, WE ARE ENRICHING THE LIVES, SOILS,
AND PLATES OF ALL HOUSTONIANS.



Urban Harvest cultivates thriving communities through gardening and access to healthy, local food.

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CREATE THRIVING COMMUNITIES



All We Need Farm

The UH market has allowed me to operate during this crazy year, to meet payroll and kept my farm working and my animals fed. Markets are not an easy enterprise to run, so I want to say thank you. I am very grateful for my spot.

— Stacey Roussel

In times of crisis, our Farmers Markets are resilient.

Urban Harvest's Saturday Farmers Market, Northeast Community Farmers Market, and our Mobile Market provide economic opportunity for 95 small businesses, including farms and ranches, and generate an overall economic impact of \$3.9 million annually. Our community of vendors preserves over 8,800 acres of productive, diversified family farmland and creates almost 600 full-time jobs and many more seasonal jobs for local farm laborers, family growers, and small business entrepreneurs.

With the guidance of local health officials, the Saturday Farmers Market and the Northeast Community Farmers Market remained open during the pandemic, updating safety regulations and health measures. As restaurants and other sales outlets closed, the number of vendors at our market increased by 30%, a testament to the resiliency of the local food community found at our farmers markets.

Women find economic opportunity with Urban Harvest.

Results from our Annual Survey revealed that 44.3% of these small businesses are women-owned, compared to an average 29% in Harris County and 28% in Texas. Learn why these entrepreneurial women chose to start their business at our farmers market.



Karuna's Kitchen

Urban Harvest has handled management and communication through the pandemic very well. [They] have made it possible to grow and sustain our business under these difficult circumstances.

— Karuna

From building to sustaining gardens: Urban Harvest is developing food security for our region in an equitable, sustainable, community-driven way.

Urban Harvest helps gardens become long-lasting greenspace by providing expertise, gardening materials, education, and volunteers to our network of 140 affiliate gardens. Gardens can achieve their full potential when they are connected to the community they serve and have the resources to grow. In 2020, these resources resulted in 225,000 pounds of produce, which represents almost 190,000 meals.

Beauty's Garden — an Urban Harvest affiliate garden

When Yvette Leno's childhood home burned down, she wasn't exactly sure how she would use the lot located in Independence Heights, the first African American municipality in Texas. Her grandparents had moved there in 1926 with a Jersey cow and industrious nature, creating a happy home and community hub where no one ever left hungry. Since then, the neighborhood had changed and was now riddled with abandoned houses and designated as a food desert. Leno realized someone had to do something, but was surprised when that someone turned out to be her. Starting Beauty's Garden helped her see she had a voice in what happens in Independence Heights, growing hope along with much needed fresh produce. Now, much like her grandmother Beauty, Leno is building community. If asked a year ago what resource the garden needed most; Leno would have quickly answered volunteers, but **the garden's partnership with Urban Harvest has helped Leno create a welcoming place for volunteers to have an experience that they won't forget.** Almost 100 years later, Leno has created the space her grandmother envisioned when she brought her Jersey cow to Independence Heights.



YOUR SUPPORT CREATES THRIVING COMMUNITIES.

INCREASE ACCESS TO HEALTHY, LOCAL FOOD FOR ALL HOUSTONIANS

Urban Harvest is transforming community health by creating sustainable, affordable fresh food access across our region.

During the pandemic, Urban Harvest met the unprecedented surge in basic food needs by drastically expanding our budding Food Access Program in our effort to make fresh, healthy food the easy, affordable choice for all.

We maximize the impact of our work by aligning food access programming with community buy-in, neighborhood needs, and collaborative partnerships. Double Up Houston partners with markets and farm stands to provide an incentive for SNAP beneficiaries to purchase local produce.

In 2020, we increased our Double Up Houston footprint to include 21 partner sites, increased our SNAP incentive match to \$40 per day, hired a Food Access Director, and launched a Mobile Market.



Urban Harvest's Mobile Market

Launched in August 2020, Urban Harvest's Mobile Market is a farmers market on wheels that brings affordable, locally-sourced produce to traditionally hard-to-reach neighborhoods.

With your support, we will improve the health of our communities and reach more people where they live.

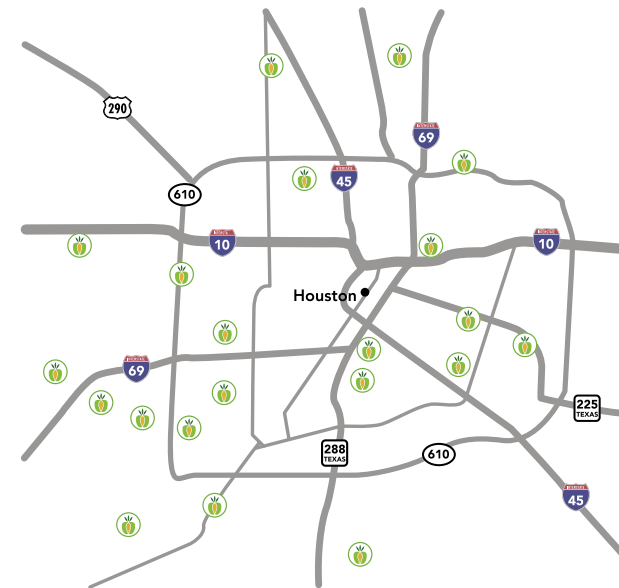
I love the Double Up program, the concept is neat, and it's an awesome way "to get the most bang for your buck". Urban Harvest's farmers markets are truly phenomenal.

— Lisa, Double Up Houston Shopper

Now in its second year, Double Up Houston is continuing to expand the customer base for local farm products: Over 900 SNAP beneficiaries came from all over the metroplex to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables through Double Up Houston. What's more, these SNAP beneficiaries are consuming more fruits and vegetables as a result.

In 2020, Double Up Houston delivered four times more fruits and vegetables compared to 2019. Today at our markets, SNAP shoppers spend an average of 80% of their SNAP benefits on fruits and vegetables, compared to 33% before Double Up Houston was implemented.

It's a win-win-win for farmers, SNAP shoppers, and the regional economy.



Today, Double Up Houston partners with farmers markets, farm stands, Community Centers, and Clinics across Houston.



SCAN QR CODE TO LEARN HOW DOUBLE UP WORKS

EDUCATE THE NEXT GENERATION OF GARDENERS

Urban Harvest is innovating to deliver meaningful learning experiences in a socially-distanced world.

In 2020, our traditional in-person classes transitioned online with opensource webinars, remote classes, virtual cooking demos, kids' activities, organic gardening videos, blogs, and recipe cards to make garden and nutrition education accessible to all.



Grow Kits bring the lessons of the garden home.

With support of 32 partners and community organizations, Urban Harvest distributed more than 1,200 Grow Kits to families in Houston, focusing on students and schools that are chronically underserved and have been the most affected by the pandemic.

Urban Harvest "Grow Kits" are a hybrid education model that combines gardening materials—like containers, transplants, seeds, and soil—with online garden and nutrition education.

As a result, we tripled the number of people taking our organic gardening classes. In total over 1,500 people took classes on topics ranging from Fruit Trees to Insectary Gardens to Compost and more!

Urban Harvest offers year-round, organic garden education and is the only organization in the region that offers Permaculture Certification, Starting a School or Community Garden, and professional development for teachers through The Edible Academy.



Our garden educators are at the forefront of Urban Harvest's work, teaching in and maintaining gardens across Houston.

FINANCES

2020 REVENUE

Contributions	70%	\$1,650,595*
Programs	22%	\$526,371
Special Events	8%	\$186,047
	100%	\$2,363,013

* includes multi-year gift

2020 EXPENSES

Education Programming & Community Outreach	74%	\$1,207,076
Management & General	12%	\$199,822
Fundraising	14%	\$225,860
	100%	\$1,632,758

WHY WE GIVE TO URBAN HARVEST



"We are pleased to be working with Urban Harvest on championing efforts that make nutritious food more accessible and affordable as well as empowering families to build healthier, stronger futures."

– Greg Thompson
President, Amerigroup Texas Medicaid



"Urban Harvest has been a mainstay for us from enjoying fresh and local Farmers Market treats with our kids by the old oak tree in the mid 00s to the annual fruit tree sales to periodically taking classes myself.

While watching it grow to include greater educational outreach serving all ages and socioeconomic levels, Barrett and I became motivated to give financial support with the hope that Urban Harvest will remain a perennial Houston institution."

– Janice Green

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\$50,000+

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\$10,000+

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NOV
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AT GUARD AND GRACE

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GROWING
MOVEMENT
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